Brazil in three moments of Foreign Policy:

Between regionalism, multilateralism and the South-South context

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Summary: The Bandung Conference, held in 1955, has been a landmark for South-South cooperation. In line with this context, Brazil developed the so-called Independent Foreign Policy (Política Externa Independente, or PEI) between 1961 and 1964, which sought to increase the autonomy of the country and promote the cooperation with Asia and Africa, as well as Latin America. However, South-South cooperation lost strength in the 1970s, among other factors, influenced by the oil crisis. At the beginning of the 21st century, South-South cooperation reappears strongly on the international stage. The current changes and political crisis in the domestic context point to a period of uncertainty and redirection, as well as posing a series of questions about the fate of Brazilian Foreign Policy, Regional Integration and the nation's efforts in regionalism, South-South

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Cooperation and even the country's positioning in relation to the traditional Brazilian global ambitions.

Keywords: South-South Cooperation; Brazil; Independent foreign policy; Brazilian political crisis

Introduction

Will Brazil, especially in light of the domestic political turmoil and changes since 2016, invest in a globalist-cosmopolitan foreign policy perspective, continue to pursue a place among global players, abandon or invest in its regional cooperation and integrationist attempts and South-South cooperation arrangements that until now had been guiding its international performance? These are issues that, being very evident in the current context, seem to already be a question of government policy, as well as in the Foreign Office, for some time now.

As of 2015, the major uncertainties and turbulences in politics and the global economic crisis, notably in several South American countries, have been signaling a wave of conservative-neoliberal emphasis, such as the election of Maurício Macri in Argentina, the process of Impeachment of President Dilma Roussef in Brazil, as well as the evolution of the peace process in Colombia and the signaling of potentially radical redefinitions and reorientations in regional structures and arrangements in the region, such as the MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market, with Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela as full members) especially in the UNASUR (Union of South American Nations - intergovernmental regional organization comprising 12 South American countries), which developed under the aegis of several popular-left governments.

The objective of this article is to compare the Independent Foreign Policy ("Política Externa Independente", known in Brazil by its acronym "PEI") of the 1960s with the recent role of Brazil in the multilateralism represented in the institutional arrangements of the BRICS (bloc formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), the IBSA (organization formed by India, Brazil and South Africa) and the UNASUR. This article points out and analyzes a duality present in Brazilian foreign policy in recent years,

namely: the role of a cosmopolitan global player, integrated and active in the international system – even though with a revisionist bias – in parallel to an integrationist and more cooperative action with the "global south".

“Regionalism” is defined here in a broader sense, “encompassing different patterns of regional cooperation between countries in a determined geographical area and different regional projects which might also result in overlapping regional organizations” (NOLTE apud HURRELL, 2014). Multilateralism is understood as efforts of a country to participate in different processes, schemes, forums and organizations in different areas which aggregate nations around the world. The United Nations Development Program defines South-South cooperation as “an exchange of resources and expertise between governments, organizations and individuals in developing countries. (...) developing countries are helping each other with knowledge, technical assistance, and/or investments. (...) technical cooperation between Southern partners, involving support through technical assistance, capacity building, transfer of knowledge and technology, etc” (UNDP, 2011, p. 10).

In the current foreign policy changes in the country, which perspective will predominate? Analyzing Brazil's foreign policy in recent decades and comparing it with recent years is an important exercise, which may signal some clues for the near future: this is the central objective of our discussion.[4]

PEI, the approach of the "Global South" and its unfolding

The so-called Independent Foreign Policy (Política Externa Independente, PEI) was developed between 1961 and 1964 by Brazil, and sought to increase the autonomy of the country, without automatic alignment with the US or the USSR. It also promoted cooperation with Asia and Africa, in addition to Latin America itself, in accordance to the "Bandung spirit" (Gonçalves and Miyamoto 1993; Gonçalves 2003).

The PEI systematized a set of principles, namely: 1 - universalization; 2 - autonomy and action free of ideological constraints; 3 - the search for the expansion of Brazil's

[4] Costa Lima, Marcos; Silva, Joyce Helena (2016), “ The Conservative reaction in Brazil: the pendumum has swung to the right in the world scenario”. In: World Affairs, Summer, april-june, V.26, nº 2

international relations for commercial purposes; 4 - the search for peace, through peaceful coexistence and general and progressive disarmament; 5 - the defense of non-intervention, self-determination of peoples and the rule of law; 6 - support to development (Leite 2011). Similarities between the Bandung principles and those of the PEI can be observed, demonstrating a relationship between the two.

The Independent Foreign Policy (PEI) represented possibilities, but also some contradictions in Brazil's role in supporting South-South cooperation. For example, in the speeches of both Jânio Quadros (1961) and João Goulart (1961-1964) at the head of the presidency of Brazil, positions quite similar to the "Bandung spirit" were observed.

Regarding Brazil's relations with Asia, it is worth mentioning that Indonesia and China were the countries that were prioritized. In May 1961, Indonesian President Achmad Sukarno was the first head of state to visit Brasilia as the Federal Capital. On relations with China, Leite (2011) argues that great attention was given so much that in May 1961, Brazil received a visit from China's commercial mission. In August 1961, Vice-President J. Goulart headed a trade mission to the People's Republic of China, where he held meetings with Mao Zedong and Vice-President Tung Bi-Wu, and was the first Vice-President of a Government to visit the country after the victory of the Revolution (Ibid, p.106).

However, it is important to emphasize the limitations and contradictions of the PEI in two themes: 1 - Brazil condemned apartheid, but opposed the application of sanctions to South Africa, under the defense of the principle of nonintervention; commercial reasons would explain this ambiguous attitude; 2 - the Brazilian position in relation to Portuguese Africa: "(...) informed, on one hand, by the anticolonialist stance and, on the other, by the commitments made with Portugal. This duality seems to explain the retreats and advances of foreign policy in relation to the independence of Lusitanian Africa. Through the Treaty of Friendship and Consultation, signed in Rio de Janeiro in November 1953, Brazil and Portugal had agreed that ‘they would always consult on international problems of manifest common interest’” (Leite 2011, 112). As Rodrigues points out (apud Leite 2011, 109-110), in signing the 1953 agreement, the country imposed difficulties on the diplomatic exercise, making any international decision on the Lusitanian colonial dependencies conditional upon a prior understanding with the Portuguese State.

It is also worth noting that even with various elements of foreign policy in consonance with "third world" countries, actors in the Brazilian State explicitly criticized the so-called "third world", as diplomat Brigidi de Mello (2014) points out. To point out discourses such as the one of San Tiago Dantas[5], emphasizing that the PEI had the objective of defending the interests of Brazil and countries in similar situation, but "without disdain to the possibilities of increase of commerce with the United States and with Western Europe" (Dantas 1962, 11 - apud Mello 2014). According to Brigidi de Mello,

> The emphasis would be on defending "not only their interests" (Brazil), but also those of the "structurally weaker nations" (Dantas 1962, 34). Far from breaking with tradition, however, the PEI was openly subject to hemispheric restrictions. It was doctrinal perfection, in the natural movement of gaining the complexity of the Nation-State, without revision of principles or affiliation to other centers of power than those submitted to US hegemony. Their actions served as bargaining movements to reinforce the essential position, without risking ruptures, being symptomatic of the participation in the MNA (movement of the non-aligned ones) only as an observer, in pragmatic caution that balanced the discourse (Brigidi de Mello 2014, 252).

However, South-South cooperation lost strength in the 1970s, among other factors, influenced by the oil crisis. In the 1970's, the price of the barrel went from 1 to 2 dollars and then to 16 and then, by the end of the decade, to US$ 32. These were very expressive increases and dramatically changed the logic of the companies that from this increase of costs, opted for Foreign Direct Investment (IEDs) and acted more directly in the financial market (techno-financial strategy became the standard). The dispute to attract IEDs made cooperation between countries in the South difficult. This phenomenon has also led to greater differentiation between the nations of the Third World, with some oil producing countries becoming rapidly rich and others rapidly impoverishing, ie, greater heterogeneity among poor countries, making cooperation difficult and increasing competition between them. It is also in this context that the foreign debt of the Latin American countries exploded because of the uncertainties that the oil crisis has generated and consequently an increase in the international interest rates. This put in question the model of import substitution and generated an advance in neoliberal international competitive thinking (HOBSBAWM & CHESNAIS, 1996).

[5] San Tiago Dantas was a Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance and one of the creators, together with Afonso Arinos and João Augusto de Araújo Castro, of the so-called "Independent Foreign Policy" (PEI), initially implanted in the Jânio Quadros government (1961).

The choices, potentialities and limitations of contemporary Brazilian foreign policy must be analyzed from Brazil's position as a "regional and intermediate power", according to Hirst & Soares de Lima (2006). But if we consider the reflection made by Honório Rodrigues, "Brazilian foreign policy from 1912 to 1960, without major changes, consisted in accompanying the United States in its programs of pan-Americanism, solidarity and worldwide collaborations". It is known that US economic support has always been a chimera, and Brazilian foreign policy has always been conditioned by internal political conjunctures and events. A clear programmatic decision has always maintained some dubiousness in appeasing the endogenous struggles and coalitions.

Latin America's dissatisfaction with US post-war behavior towards the region was evident in the disproportion of US economic assistance to Europe and that to the region: "In the eleven years following the end of the conflict, Europe received twenty-five billion dollars of economic aid (apart from massive military aid) while Latin America received only one billion seven hundred million dollars". The contrast was even stronger if we considered that 90% of US aid to Europe was in the form of overall donations unrelated to specific projects, while for Latin America 83% of the cooperation was given in the form of an Eximbank loan.

Current South-South cooperation strategies and emphasis on multilateralism carry the historical experience of the G77's political disintegration, which occurred at the same time as developing countries introduced greater flexibility in economic negotiations and were, according to Hirst & Soares de Lima, the result of a crisis in development policies and bargaining strategies of Third World countries, which demonstrated the limits of "Third Worldism" and stressed the extent to which material interests, rather than common and shared principles, maintain coalitions. The authors point out that the formation of the G20 coalition at the Cancun meeting in 2003 represented a "rebirth of the spirit of a third-world coalition", though now focused on the specific agricultural interests of developing countries. Hirst & Soares de Lima point out that the creation of the G20 was an opportunity for Brazil to renew its role as an "indispensable intermediary" between the "weak" and the "strong" nations. However, they point out that while the G20 involves echoes of the past, it also puts Brazil in a new position during the Doha round as a *demandeur* on agricultural issues, assuming more active and demanding stances (with more offensive interests for agricultural liberalization which led to the creation of the G-20 itself, in concert with China, India and South Africa, within the framework of the Doha

Round of the World Trade Organization). This, in turn, is the result of the strong competitiveness of its agricultural exports, as well as the emphasis it placed on procedural issues within the WTO, on market access rules, and on the importance of strengthening multilateral rules (Hirst & Soares De Lima 2006, 27).

Brazil's role in South-South cooperation at the beginning of the 21st century: BRICS, IBSA, and UNASUR

At the beginning of the 21st century, South-South cooperation reappears strongly on the international stage. Brazilian foreign policy, as in the days of Bandung, was sensitive to the international context at the beginning of the 21st century. Many analysts argue that president Lula (2003-2010) sought the strategy of "autonomy by diversification" differently from the so-called "autonomy by participation" of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government.

Vigevani & Cepaluni (2007) describes that the prior "autonomy by participation" foreign policy sought a relationship of rapprochement and "friendship" with the United States while maintaining a strategy of "autonomy for participation", with the use of "room for maneuver" offered by growing international economic interdependence in global stage. The authors propose that the initiatives of the Lula da Silva government have focused more on international trade negotiations and the pursuit of policy coordination with developing and emerging countries, especially India, South Africa, China and Russia. Relations with South America also deserved particular attention (VIGEVANI & CEPALUNI, 2007, p.276). In this sense, despite the continuity of Brazilian participation in International Organizations and Forums, Lula sought more intense partnerships with non-traditional allies, such as African and Asian countries.

One of the aspects considered by several authors as a deficiency in the current configuration of the UNASUR (criticism also directed to the IBSA and the BRICS) is the low institutionalization of their processes. However, perhaps this "minimalism" is one of the explanations for the success of the UNASUR on several fronts. After all, in addition to the asymmetries, there are many very different and disparate interests and views on the models of regionalism and integration of the nations that form the organization, which

focus especially on the economic aspects of these models. But within the UNASUR (as well as in the IBSA and the BRICS), they are able to design and execute common projects.

The term BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) was created by the Goldman Sachs Investment Bank in 2001 to describe the bloc of countries destined to boost the world economy in the coming decades (later, the "S" was added, to include South Africa). Since then, the acronym has has generated heated debates and discussion, both in the private and public spheres, about its strategic importance, but also about its contradictions and limitations. However, in 2008, in the face of the global financial crisis, the group formalized and held regular summits. According to the Brazilian ambassador in Russia, Antônio Guerreiro, the launch of the new BRICS Development Bank, approved at the 6th Summit of the bloc in 2014 in Fortaleza, was strategic for the group:

> It is important to mention that we now envision the beginning of the start-up of the new Bank, and of agreements signed by the presidencies of the Central Bank and the BNDES (The Brazilian Development Bank, also known as National Bank for Economic and Social Development, is a federal public company associated with the Ministry of Development, Industry, and Trade) together with the national development banks of other countries, in cooperation with the BRICS New Development Bank. The parliaments of the five countries have ratified the status of the New Bank and the Contingent Arrangement of Reserves. Therefore, we have a more or less defined time horizon so that both institutions can become operational in concrete terms (Guerreiro apud Cristhine 2015).

Cristhine informs that the BRICS New Development Bank will be based in Shanghai, China. The first president is a financier from India, and the other members of the BRICS will have vice presidents, with Brazil being represented by economist Paulo Nogueira Batista Júnior, former executive director of the IMF. Regarding the Contingent Reserves Agreement, according to the author, Ambassador Antônio Guerreiro explains that a headquarters for the BRICS members' emergency fund has not yet been considered. The matter has not yet been duly examined.

In the context of scientific cooperation, a study by Pierro (2015) indicates that in 2000, about 8% of the total work of Brazilian authors published with researchers from around the world was done in collaboration with the BRICS colleagues. As of 2012 this percentage had already risen to 14%, demonstrating the approach of Brazil to the bloc.

Russia is the BRIC country with which Brazilian researchers have most interacted. In total, more than 3,777 articles published in co-authoring between 1996 and 2012, in areas

such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biological and agricultural sciences and materials science. However, in this scope, collaborations with researchers from countries from the West still prevail. There is a strong interaction of the BRICS with the United States and Germany and found that the five countries still collaborate more with the two powers of science than with each other. In the case of Brazil, more than 20% of co-authorship is the result of cooperation with North Americans (PIERRO, 2015).

The India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA), founded in 2003, is a political, strategic and economic agreement that represents in a sense a deeper incarnation of the "spirit of Bandung" because it excludes two difficult actors in defining them in the current global geopolitics as countries of the South: Russia, a former world superpower, permanent member of the UN Security Council and possessing nuclear weapons, as well as China, which is also a great candidate to be the largest economy in a short time. In this sense, the IBSA in fact represents a greater materialization of the concept of South-South cooperation promoting horizontal cooperation (Visentini 2010). But it is noteworthy that, unlike the BRICS, the group has not met frequently (the last time being in 2011), perhaps because of the economic, political and military constraints of the three countries involved.

A central emphasis to the foundation of the IBSA was the economic development strategy combined with South-South cooperation, according to Hirst & Soares de Lima. The IBSA initiative, launched in 2003, bringing together India, Brazil and South Africa, demonstrates not only the centrality of the development objective, but also a renewed emphasis on South-South cooperation, combining classic themes such as the fight against poverty and the defense of multiculturalism, with the commitment of democratic institutions and values. In the context of growing protectionism and increasingly difficult access to markets in the North, economic and trade gains from cooperation with the countries of the South have become of strategic importance for Brazil (Hirst & Soares de Lima 2006, p. 25).

At the same time, it is interesting to recognize that, although it is not the main partner of the other countries in the group, Brazil has cooperated in areas where it excels, such as in the medical and health sciences. In recent years, for example, affinity with South Africa has grown in these fields of knowledge. "The strong collaboration between Brazil and South Africa in the medical sciences is possibly due to the common interest in developing new treatments for neglected diseases, such as malaria and Chagas, and also for AIDS", says Finardi (who did research on the subject) (Finardi apud Pierro 2015).

In South America, the UNASUR - Union of South American Nations - was founded in 2008 and consists of an intergovernmental organization composed of the twelve states of the region. According to Gratius & Saraiva, the MERCOSUR and the UNASUR are concrete results of Brazil's efforts to create, for economic, diplomatic and security reasons, a South American Community of Nations. The authors point out that, while the MERCOSUR is the platform and core of regional economic integration, the UNASUR is a forum for political consultation and interstate cooperation in infrastructure (especially for Brazilian investments), defense and other topics on the bloc's agenda. The authors credit to the Brazilian government the fact that, for the first time, South America has become a geopolitical space with regional and global influence (Gratius & Saraiva, 2013).

The UNASUR, like other processes of regionalism in Latin America, follows an intergovernmentalist model of association, in which sovereign states are the main actors in the formulation and implementation of these same processes. Unlike the model of integration of the European Union, for example, where there is a focus on institutions and organizations of a supranational nature, in the UNASUR states seek to maintain, above the regional vision, the national interest and the preservation of national sovereignty. That is, the concepts of non-intervention, autonomy and self-determination of peoples are unquestionable values within the institution.

What strikes us most in consonance with the hypothesis of this work is the ambitious role that Brazil seeks to occupy in South-South cooperation, especially fostering its interests in South America. The Brazilian protagonism is evident in the text that appeared on the front page of the UNASUR official website:

> The Union of South American Nations promotes a series of long-term projects that will integrate South America in form and substance: the construction of an interoceanic highway that will open Brazil's passage to the Pacific Ocean, the establishment of free trade and in the future, probably a single currency. The vision of the UNASUR is the regional development sustained by the union of its sovereign parts: nations in peace, prosperous, with sense of belonging and South American citizenship (UNASUR).

When defining the specificities of South-South cooperation, Sanahuja proposes that:

> (...) the strong growth of this process in recent years is, "first, an expression of the growing strength and political autonomy of emerging countries, the broader scope of their interests, claims of regional or global leadership, and their willingness to acquire more autonomy in the international political economy. In the words of Fareed Zakaria (2009) it expresses "the rise of others" in

> relation to the hegemony of the United States and the OECD (Sanahuja 2011, p. 212).

However, according to authors like Tussie (2013), in addition to the South-South political aspect and cooperation, the UNASUR (especially in projects sponsored by the Cosiplan and financed by the BNDES), besides the MERCOSUR and other bilateral arrangements in the South American continent and Latin America, also promotes strong projection and expansion of economic interests of Brazilian companies around the world, but especially in the region:

> One of Brazil's main strengths lies in the internationalization of its companies and in the support given by the State to these activities. Vale, which produces 15% of the world's iron ore, is the second-largest miner on the planet. Brazil's globalized players are from the food industry: JBS Friboi (the world's largest beef company), construction services (Odebrecht, Andrade Gutierrez, Camargo Correa), steel (Gerdau), financial services (Banco do Brasil, Itaú) and extractive industries (Petrobras, Vale). These companies are powerful actors in global affairs, but in particular in the region's power politics, where most of their interests are deployed and where they exert their influence in various fields, in different ways and with different outcomes (Tussie 2013, 254).

The end of "euphoria": domestic crisis and international indefinition

Two major components of the economic and political crises worldwide severely affected Brazil, especially after the outcome of the 2014 presidential elections in the country, according to Costa Lima & Silva (2016):

> (…) The first was a lowering of commodity prices due to the global economic slowdown, which led to criticisms of the Dilma government's economic policy from the banking and financial sectors and their supportive media. The second was an artificially produced component disseminated to the public through the media that promoted a deliberate anti-government campaign by propagating a general pessimistic atmosphere. Although the economic effects were strong and the people felt the results of the economic slowdown, one must not minimise the media oligopoly's ability to associate corruption and economic problems exclusively to the allegedly ethical moral depravity and mismanagement of the Workers' Party (COSTA LIMA & SILVA, 2016, p. 164).

The recent economic and political crisis in South America requires a brief analysis of the importance of the so-called presidential diplomacy and its impact on the region's efforts on regional integration and South-South cooperation. The presidential and ideological changes in the commands of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, among others, coupled with

the Venezuelan political turmoil, reinforce the impact of the leaders' political will for the regional integration efforts and on the processes of South-South cooperation.

As discussed in the introduction, since 2015, the uncertainties and turbulences in politics and the global economic crisis, notably in several South American countries, have been signaling a wave of conservative-neoliberal emphasis, such as the election of Maurício Macri, in Argentina; President Dilma Roussef's impeachment process in Brazil; as well as the evolution of the peace process in Colombia and the signaling of potentially radical redefinitions and reorientations in regional structures and arrangements in the region, such as the MERCOSUR and especially in the UNASUR, which developed under the aegis of several popular-left wing governments. The ousting of president Dilma Rousseff involved a complexity of factors, as explained by Costa Lima & Silva (2016):

> Faced with a crisis, Brazil's right-wing movement rose and the street protests that gathered were mainly of middle-class reactionaries, conservatives and a portion of those belonging to the old dictatorial period. The gap between the executive that emerged victorious from the last elections and the legislative conservative opposition seen as representative of the demands from the streets, led to the impeachment process. As in a vicious circle Brazil remains caught in a trap set up by conservative forces. The same actors have persisted throughout Brazilian history—the landowning oligarchy opposed to land reform; industrial entrepreneurs averse to labour rights, the payment of taxes and solidarity for national development; an elitist middle-class that is conservative and against any increase in welfare to the lower classes and a new constituency of Pentecostals who are religiously intolerant and demand a reactionary agenda inspired by US conservative politics. In this context, the incipient Brazilian democracy – whose institutions were moving towards greater solidity and stability—has been challenged again. This time not by the armed forces or a violent uprising but by an apparently legal process. There is a false representation of popular aspirations that mainly reflects the discontent of the elites defeated in the 2014 elections. As President Dilma Rousseff has not committed any crime her ouster is a coup d'état carried out by Congress, the judiciary and the media tearing up the constitution (COSTA LIMA & SILVA, 2016, p. 167-168).

The changes in Brazil's post-impeachment foreign policy signal a declining of the stance of the country as a "global player", now seeking to align the country with the Western powers especially on economic and trade terms, in traditional partnerships with the United States and Europe, conforming to the status of the country as a "global trader" (GAMA, 2017).

The post-impeachment political configuration revealed ever stronger force of conservative and neoliberal power in Brazilian domestic arena. However, to date, these initiatives have produced few results: the victory of Donald Trump's protectionist

populism is nothing short of a nightmare for economic negotiations between Brazil and the US; in addition to the Brazilian inactivity in areas such as the UNASUR, paralysis within the MERCOSUR, especially in the face of the crisis in Venezuela (despite signs that this bloc is trying an alignment with the Pacific Alliance), and the stuck negotiations with the European Union, among other failures.

Conclusions

In this article, we evaluated the role of Brazil in the multilateralism represented by the the BRICS, the IBSA and the UNASUR and South-South relations, comparing elements of the Independent Foreign Policy (PEI) and recent Brazilian foreign policy changes in the current international system. Both in the 1960s and recently we identified that the country played a relevant role as a promoter of South-South cooperation worldwide, but also presented limitations and contradictions.

In the 1960s, the PEI was limited not only because of Brazil's dependence on the United States, but also because it had not broken its tradition of privileged relations with Portugal, generating contradictions in its policy for Africa. Even though Brazil has opposed the US and its policy of embargo against Cuba, it has not been able to escape the sphere of influence of the great power of the West.

For Brazilian foreign policy in recent times, especially in the Lula period (2003-2010), there has been a resumption of the Brazilian role as a promoter of South-South cooperation, especially in its engagement in the BRICS, the IBSA and the UNASUR. The three groups presented potentialities and challenges for the current Brazilian foreign policy.

Both in relation to the BRICS and the UNASUR we observe that Brazil has benefited individually; in the first case, for example, with the institutionalization of the Development Bank and the Contingency Fund, and in the second, with the creation of the South American Council for Infrastructure and Planning (COSIPLAN), which promotes the insertion and projection of Brazilian companies in the continent, and the South American Defense Council (CDS). On the other hand, the IBSA is part of a logic of both internal limitations (economic, political and military crises), lack of resources and

political support (with changes of domestic coalitions and president), and can stagnate advances in cooperation among these countries that would more genuinely symbolize cooperation in the "Bandung spirit".

In the current context of change in the South American scenario, with the rise of more neo-liberal governments, especially in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, in this article we suggest that despite a possible setback in the regional integration initiatives and South-South cooperation, in a wider context of global crisis and changes in US foreign policy (more nationalist and less concerned with Latin America), these governments would tend to continue promoting integration (not necessarily South-South cooperation), albeit with a much more economic, rather than political, focus.

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